

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Please rewrite claims 1, 3 and 7, and add new claim 17 as follows:

Listing of Claims:

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Claim 1 (currently amended): An optical fiber array, comprising: a holding member including a substrate having flat surfaces arranged on opposite sides of a group of sectional V-shaped housing grooves formed in said substrate for housing optical fibers on a top face, said optical fibers each having an optical fiber tip end bare portion housed in said holding member; a cover plate positioned on the substrate; and an adhesive provided directly between the substrate and the cover plate to fix the optical fibers in the housing grooves, wherein a distance between a center axis of the outermost housing groove and an end portion of the substrate is at least five times larger than the radius of the optical fibers, ~~and~~ a distance Y between the flat surfaces of the substrate and the cover plate is $L/6 \leq Y \leq L/2$, ~~wherein~~ with Y is being a thickness of the adhesive and L is being a distance from a contact point between the housed optical fibers and the housing grooves to the cover plate, and wherein said adhesive forms a meniscus between (i) opposed sides of the cover plate and the flat surfaces of the substrate, or (ii) opposed end portions of the substrate and respective surface portions of the cover plate, and the height of the meniscus is greater than Y.

Claim 2 (previously presented): An optical fiber array as claimed in claim 1, wherein a height of a portion of the optical fibers which protrudes from the housing grooves on the substrate is substantially equal to the distance Y between the substrate and the cover plate.

Claim 3 (currently amended): An optical fiber array as claimed in claim 1, wherein the distance Y between the substrate and the cover plate is $L / 4 \leq Y \leq L/2$.

Claim 4 (previously presented): An optical fiber array as claimed in claim 1, wherein the adhesive is epoxy-based.

Claim 5 (previously presented): An optical fiber array as claimed in claim 1, wherein a width of the cover plate is different from a width of the substrate.

Claim 6 (previously presented): An optical fiber array as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a placement face for placing a covered portion of the optical fibers provided at a rear part of a housing groove forming face, and a step provided between the housing groove forming face and the placement face for placing and housing the optical fibers.

Claim 7 (currently amended): An optical fiber array as claimed in claim 2, wherein the distance Y between the substrate and the cover plate is $L / 4 \leq Y \leq L/2$.

Claim 8 (previously presented): An optical fiber array as claimed in claim 2, wherein the adhesive is epoxy-based.

Claim 9 (previously presented): An optical fiber array as claimed in claim 3, wherein the adhesive is epoxy-based.

Claim 10 (previously presented): An optical fiber array as claimed in claim 2, wherein a width of the cover plate is different from a width of the substrate.

Claim 11 (previously presented): An optical fiber array as claimed in claim 3, wherein a width of the cover plate is different from a width of the substrate.

Claim 12 (previously presented): An optical fiber array as claimed in claim 4, wherein a width of the cover plate is different from a width of the substrate.

Claim 13 (previously presented): An optical fiber array as claimed in claim 2, further comprising a placement face for placing a covered portion of the optical fibers provided at a rear part of a housing groove forming face, and a step provided between the housing groove forming face and the placement face for placing and housing the optical fibers.

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Claim 14 (previously presented): An optical fiber array as claimed in claim 3, further comprising a placement face for placing a covered portion of the optical fibers provided at a rear part of a housing groove forming face, and a step provided between the housing groove forming face and the placement face for placing and housing the optical fibers.

Claim 15 (previously presented): An optical fiber array as claimed in claim 4, further comprising a placement face for placing a covered portion of the optical fibers provided at a rear part of a housing groove forming face, and a step provided between the housing groove forming face and the placement face for placing and housing the optical fibers.

Claim 16 (previously presented): An optical fiber array as claimed in claim 5, further comprising a placement face for placing a covered portion of the optical fibers provided at a rear part of a housing groove forming face, and a step provided between the housing groove forming face and the placement face for placing and housing the optical fibers.

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Claim 17 (new): An optical fiber array, comprising: a holding member including a substrate having flat surfaces arranged on opposite sides of a group of sectional V-shaped housing grooves formed in said substrate for housing optical fibers on a top face, said optical fibers each having an optical fiber tip end bare portion housed in said holding member; a cover plate positioned on the substrate; and an adhesive provided directly between the substrate and the cover plate to fix the optical fibers in the housing grooves, wherein a distance between a center axis of the outermost housing groove and an end portion of the substrate is at least five times larger than the radius of the optical fibers, and, over the entire length of the cover plate, a distance Y between the flat surfaces of the substrate and the cover plate is $L/6 \leq Y \leq L/2$, wherein Y is a thickness of the adhesive and L is a distance from a contact point between the housed optical fibers and the housing grooves to the cover plate.